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Britain makes horsemeat raids as scandal spirals

LONDON (AFP) - British police searching for the source of horsemeat in kebabs and burgers yesterday raided two meat plants in the first such operation since a scandal over the mislabelling of beef gripped Europe.

France meanwhile became the second European country after Britain to confirm that frozen lasagne also contained horse, while supermarkets in Switzerland and the Netherlands pulled more ready-made meals from the shelves out of precaution.

The developments came on the eve of a European Union crisis meeting in Brussels to address the scandal, which has raised suspicions of links to organised crime and public fears over health.

In Britain, police and officials from the Food Standards Agency raided a slaughterhouse in northern England and a meat producing factory in Wales, before shutting both

sites and seizing all meat there.

The agency said the Peter Boddy slaughterhouse in Todmorden, in the county of West Yorkshire, was believed to have supplied horse carcasses to Farmbox Meats in Aberystwyth, Wales.

"The agency and the police are looking into the circumstances through which meat products, purporting to be beef for kebabs and burgers, were sold when they were in fact horse," the agency said.

Andrew Rhodes, operations director of the FSA, said he ordered an audit of horse producing abattoirs in Britain when the scandal arose last month "and I was shocked to uncover what appears to be a blatant misleading of consumers."

British environment minister Owen Paterson said he expected the "full force of the law to be brought down on anyone involved in this kind of activity."

Continued on page 7

New Oranjestad Tram Service out for a dry run



The long awaited tram service from the Oranjestad Cruise Terminal through to the main shopping street, Caya G.F. Betico Croes, will soon start pending finalization and implementation of traffic laws on its routes. It was spied on the Havenstraat "stretching its legs" and the newly laid tracks for any glitches, and it would appear "all systems are go"! A few bystanders were welcome to test the comfort of the seats, and shoppers were abuzz at the unexpected sight of the attractive new mode of free transportation for Aruba's capital city.

Change in oil product prices



- The new price for diesel LS will be 210.4 cent per liter, an increase of 4.0 cent.

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Reina Beatrix International Airport named Routes Americas winner for first heat of 2013



L.-r., Ronella Tjin Asjoe-Croes, Minister Oduber, Prime Minister Eman and Peter Stein-

Being selected as runner up for several years running for the Routes Airport Marketing Awards (www.routesonline.com) is a great honor for a small airport such as Aruba's Reina Beatrix International Airport. Aruba was also named the sub-champions spot for Best Destination Marketing Campaign by a Tourism Authority in October of last year, in a worldwide competition.

On February 12, during a gala dinner in Cartagena, Colombia, Aruba was no longer a bridesmaid, but was named the winner during the first heat of the 2013 competition. Aruba's

airport claimed the title as **Best Airport Marketing Under 4 Million Passengers, in 6th Routes Americas** – the largest route development event for the entire Americas. San Diego Airport took the top spot for airports processing over 4 million passengers.

Aruba's Prime Minister Mike Eman welcomed island press and the CEO of the Aruba Airport Authority, Peter Steinmetz, to offer his personal congratulations to the personnel and management of the Reina Beatrix International Airport on this illustrious achievement at the Government offices yester-

day morning.

Aruba's Minister of Tourism, Otmar Oduber, and CEO of the Aruba Tourism Authority, (ATA) Ronella Tjin Asjoe-Croes, were also present to receive kudos from PM Eman for the exceptional performance of the tourism industry for the month of January.

Analysis of tourism statistics show an increase in visitors and revenues of 5.2% over January of 2012, with 66.9 percent of the visitors arriving from North America. Latin Americans represent 21.7 percent of the total visitors and European 8.9 percent, which is up by 2.5 percent over January of last year.

Minister of Tourism Oduber expressed that privatization of the ATA was key in the tangible success of Aruba's marketing endeavors. The steady growth of vacationers over the past two years is a testament to the attention to Aruba's tourism product, and continuing efforts to maintain and improve the quality.

Average Daily Rates (ADR) and Revenue per Available Room, (REVPAR,) are also significantly increased, and important indicator that visitors appreciate the quality of the Aruba experience.

Rosalie Klein

William Anthony visits Minister Abath, talks about music and the Shoco



Minister Plenipotentiary of Aruba Mr. Edwin Abath and William Anthony, together with the cd Grandi Grandi Grandi in hands. Visible behind them, the painting with the two Shocos.

Last year at the end of December William Anthony was guest at Minister Plenipotentiary of Aruba Mr. Edwin Abath in the Padú del Caribe Hall in The Hague. He handed over to the Minister one copy of his new single Grandi Grandi Grandi.

Continued on page 3

Tuscan Italian Lover's Night



Valentine's Day
February 14th, Thursday 2013
5:30 - 10:30 PM

La Vista

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Appetizer: Creamy potato soup with bacon -or-
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Entrée: Land and Sea Filet mignon and shrimp served with à portobello red Wine sauce -or-
Duo of Mahi Mahi and grouper with à white Wine sauce
Dessert: Chocolate mousse with whipped cream

Cilo City Lounge

- 3 course menu \$65 per couple
Appetizer: Seasonal salad with marinated artichoke and grilled salmon served with sweet tomato salsa.
Entrée: Grilled tenderloin combined with mahi mahi seared with fried onion rings & creamy herb sauce with garlic.
Dessert: Valentine's strawberry heart.

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- FREE toppings on all ice creams.

Hung Paradise

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Grand Café Tropical

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*Offer valid from February 9 – February 14

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William Anthony visits Minister Abath, talks ...

Continued from page 2

In the vivacious conversation about the CD, fond memories emerged of the original songs on the cd, translated in Papiamento by William Anthony.

The number Nos Ta Uno is very much in the taste of Minister Edwin Abath. The original has the title Somos Novios and is written by the Mexican musician and composer Armando Manzanero.

The Minister proudly drew William Anthony's attention on the painting with two Shocos, (as the Burrowing Owl is

known locally) that was hanging on the wall. The Shoco (national bird of Aruba) is much loved by the native islanders and appears on the florin, the national flag, and on postage stamps.

William and Mr. Abath know each other from the time they participated in the 'Festival Internacional de la Voz y la Canción de Puerto Rico' and the selection for 'Festival OTI de la Canción Aruba' (Organización de Televisión Iberoamericana). William Anthony now lives

in The Netherlands and dedicates his attention to songs written by Antillean composers of years past. Songs that until now were unknown and never been recorded and songs that have fallen into oblivion. They are now modified with fresh sound. Grandi Grandi Grandi is the seventh production under the management of William Anthony. The mp3 files are for download in iTunes Store, AmazonMP3 (United States) and the various download portals worldwide.



Parliament to deliberate proposed law on multi-functional facilities

ORANJESTAD -- The government of Aruba has been focusing on the renovation and innovation of the city center and in the Barrios, as well as on the improvement of the social life in our communities. This focus has been the objective of the BoAruba project.

This week the Aruba Parliament will be deliberating on the newly proposed law designed to bring about an improvement in the quality of life in the Barrios. Specifically 5 Barrios have been targeted for the creation of multi-functional accommodations, namely, Noord, Paradera, Santa Cruz, Savaneta and San Nicolas.

These multi-functional facilities will be offering different social services to the public as well as provide places where people could sit and just relax...all under one roof. Aruba has 5 auxiliary government offices where certain bills can be paid and some other government services are available.

The government is intent on expanding these facilities and make them more optimal for the services they are designed to provide, and to develop them into modern multi-functional accommodations.

The government, in the past three years, has created "public, private partnerships" between the government and the Stichting Onroerend Goed Aruba (SOGA) with which they developed different projects.

SOGA financed and built the structures while the government developed the facilities to be housed in them. For a long term lease of more than 5 years, the government needs the approval of Parliament. For this reason the government has prepared the Legal Enabling Decree which will be deliberated upon in Parliament this week.

These plans are all part of the intent on creating an integral innovation in the Barrios... "working together towards integral innovation in our Barrios..." The ultimate goal is to reinforce the fiber of our community and promote social cohesion in the Aruban society.

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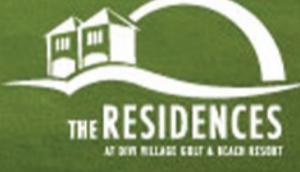


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Proud Dutch class Oceangoing Patrol Vessel welcomed to Curacao Harbor

Witnessed by a few hundred, the brand new Hr. Ms. Friesland sailed majestically into the harbor of Willemstad, Curaçao yesterday. This is the very first time that this brand new marine vessel sailed across the ocean

With the pounding of cannon shots and hundreds with cameras in hand, the Commandant Zeemacht Caribisch territory, the armed Curacao Military and the Defense personnel, offered their salute while the "Pijper of the Marine Korps" presented their musical serenade. It was an impressive experience and beautiful sight to behold and experience.

The ceremonial arrival received such a special welcome in view of the fact that it also marked a historical milestone.



This year, 2013, the Royal Dutch Marines is celebrating its 525th year of existence. The theme for this celebration is innovation.

As of now with the first deployment of marines, the Hr. Ms. Friesland at the end of January was officially put into service by Dutch Minister

Hennis-Plasschaert. The 108 meters long vessel is one of the four brand new Oceangoing Patrol Vessels of the Dutch class. It is designed for worldwide service for operations such as: coast guard tasks, disastrous events, antidrug operations, as well as for rescue from pirating. For the next four months, the Friesland will be stationed in the Caribbean for the Royal Dutch Marines and the Caribbean Coast guard.

The ship and its crew are ready and well trained for whatever activity. They are well prepared, for example, to take on humanitarian tasks and assistance. The vessel is also professional equipped to handle all illegal practices at sea. The ship has also received a

Law Enforcement Detachment (LEDET) from the American Coast Guard to deal with any counter drugs issues beyond our territorial waters. For operations within our territorial waters a coast guard boarding team would be deployed.

The vessel's crew is a 55 man staff, but can be expanded with specialists up to a maximum of 90 men. The Friesland is equipped with 2 very fast speed boats of the FRISC type complete with a Belgium Alouette Helicopter. The Helicopter suffered minor damages in its tail piece due to bad weather, but is soon expected to be at the Hato Coast Guard for repairs. The Helicopter is expected to be repaired and back in service by Thursday.



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Hagel defense nomination passes Senate panel

WASHINGTON (AFP) - A divided Senate panel approved Chuck Hagel on Tuesday to be the next US secretary of defense, a key step in a process that could see the controversial nominee confirmed as early as this week.

The Senate Armed Services Committee split along party lines to vote 14 to 11, with one abstention, to approve the former Republican senator whose positions on Iran, Israel and the Iraq war sparked concerns by fellow conservatives.

If approved by the full Senate, Hagel would replace outgoing Pentagon chief Leon Panetta.

"We will now favorably report the nomination of Chuck Hagel to the Senate," said committee chairman Carl Levin after a tense two-hour hearing that saw lawmakers verbally sparring over Hagel's qualifications, his occasionally evasive re-

sponses to senators' questions and even his patriotism.

Some of the harshest criticism came from Senator Lindsey Graham, who said Hagel was well outside the left or right lanes of American politics on foreign policy.

"When it comes to some of the Iranian (and) Israeli issues, there's the Chuck Hagel lane. He's in a league of his own, guys," Graham said.

"I say dumb things every day."

With Hagel, it has been "a series of things, a series of votes, an edge about him that makes many of us very unnerved about his selection at a time when the world is on fire," he added.

Shortly before the vote, Graham told reporters he would seek to put a procedural block on Hagel's confirmation vote, but Democratic Majority Leader Harry Reid brushed aside the threat, saying he expected to bring a vote to the Senate floor "this week."

Chinese in Costa Rica set record for fried rice

SAN JOSE (AFP) - Members of Costa Rica's Chinese community celebrated the arrival of the Year of the Snake by setting the world record Tuesday for the largest amount of fried rice ever cooked. Briton Ralph Hannah, an inspector with the Guinness World Records, certified the win after putting the giant meal -- enough to feed some 7,000 people -- on a scale. The official weight: 837 kilograms (1,845 pounds), which nearly doubles the previous record. Armed with shovel-sized spoons, 52 cooks toiled over an enormous wok built especially for the event in San Jose's recently inaugurated Chinatown. Some 735 kilograms of rice were used, along with 200 kilograms of chicken, 120 kilograms of ham, 20 kilograms of Chinese sausage, hundreds of eggs and vast amounts of chopped vegetables.

Rebels seize airport as Syria dead nears 70,000

DAMASCUS (AFP) - Rebels on Tuesday overran a military air base and captured warplanes, gaining ground in northern Syria for a second straight day as the UN said the death toll from the 23-month conflict was nearly 70,000.

The military advance came as prospects for a political solution to the war faded and as UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon urged President Bashar al-Assad's regime to accept an opposition leader's dialogue offer.

The Syrian Observatory for Human Rights said the rebels captured a military airport at Al-Jarrah in Aleppo province, seizing for the first time a fleet of warplanes in-

cluding MiG fighters.

During the assault, the rebels killed, injured or imprisoned dozens of troops, the watchdog said, adding withdrawing troops also left behind ammunition.

Soon afterwards, regime fighter jets pounded Al-Jarrah to try to dislodge the rebels, the Observatory said, adding there were raids near the international airport which has come under a rebel assault.

A military source in Aleppo confirmed the rebel capture "after 48 hours of fierce combat", but downplayed the importance of Al-Jarrah.

"It is a very small airport, used for training purposes," he said. "There are only small

amounts of unusable ammunition left there, and several planes that have long been out of action."

But Colonel Abdel Jabbar al-Okaidi of the opposition Free Syrian Army insisted the rebels achieved a "major advance" in Aleppo province and said there would be "more surprises" soon.

Okaidi told AFP: "We achieved full control over Al-Jarrah airport... in addition to a series of checkpoints on the road between the airport and Aleppo city."

Assad meanwhile called for "collective action" to limit the effects of the crisis, while accusing groups of trying to destroy infrastructure, state news agency SANA said.

Hackers broadcast zombie apocalypse alert on US TV

LOS ANGELES (AFP) - Hackers caused a bizarre alert in the US state of Montana by broadcasting a warning about zombies attacking the living, local television channels said Tuesday.

The apocalyptic warning interrupted programming via the Emergency Alert System, normally used for real catastrophes such as extreme weather, or even a direct message from the US president in the case of a national crisis.

The message was preceded by a buzzing noise typical of such broadcasts,

before a voice intoned: "Civilian authorities in your area have reported that the bodies of the dead are rising from their graves, and attacking the living."

"Follow the messages on screen, that will be updated as information becomes available. Do not attempt or apprehend these bodies, as they are considered extremely dangerous," it added.

"This warning applies to all areas receiving this broadcast. This station will now cease transmission, so please use your battery powered

radio" to hear updates.

The warning broke into regular programming Monday evening on at least four local television stations, according to Cynthia Thompson, station manager at ABC10-CW5.

"It has been determined that a 'back door' attack allowed the hacker to access the security of the EAS equipment," she said in an online statement, adding that WNMU-TV 13 at Northern Michigan University was also hacked.



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N. Korea warned US, as Kerry faces first crisis

WASHINGTON (AFP) - New US Secretary of State John Kerry faced his first global crisis yesterday as North Korea defied UN resolutions to carry out its third nuclear test.

Just 12 days into his tenure as America's top diplomat, Kerry found himself making late night calls to Asian counterparts after Pyongyang went ahead with an underground detonation of a nuclear device.

"The DPRK did inform us at the State Department of their intention to conduct a nuclear test, without citing any specific timing prior to the event," State Department spokeswoman Victoria Nuland told reporters. "We were advised."

But she would not say how much notice Pyongyang gave before conducting what US intelligence said was "probably... an underground nuclear explosion" of "approximately several kilotons" at its Punggye-ri nuclear test site.

"I'm simply going to tell you that it was prior to the event," she said, adding the warning came through channels put in place as Washington and Pyongyang do not have diplomatic ties.

Nuland stressed that Washington had again told North Korea, also known as the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK), in the "strongest terms" that it opposed any nuclear test.

The United States is now pushing for "consequences" at the United Nations, Nuland said, confirming that another layer of sanctions would be one option.

Last week in his first public comments about North Korea as secretary of state, Kerry warned the expected nuclear test would only lead to a "greater potential of conflict" and do nothing to help the country's stricken people.

Britain makes horsemeat raids as scandal spirals *(continued from pg 1)*

The raids on the British meat premises opened a new front in the pan-European search for the source of the horsemeat after allegations had so far focused on Romania.

In France, retailer Picard said tests had confirmed that horsemeat was present in two lots of frozen "beef" lasagne meals made by the French firm Comigel.

Retailers in Britain, Swe-

den, France, Switzerland and the Netherlands have been removing Comigel products after the firm alerted Swedish frozen food giant Findus to the presence of horsemeat in its meals last week. Swiss supermarket giant Coop said yesterday it had now withdrawn all frozen lasagnes produced by Comigel as a precaution.

Comigel denies any wrong-

doing and has said it got its meat from another French firm, Spanghero, which said it was supplied from two abattoirs in Romania who allegedly passed off horsemeat as beef.

But Romanian Prime Minister Victor Ponta on Monday angrily denied his country was to blame. He said Spanghero did not have a direct contract with Romanian firms and he called on European Union officials to find out where the fraud

originated and who are the guilty parties.

Dutch supermarkets PLUS and Boni meanwhile said Tuesday they had withdrawn Prima frost brand frozen lasagne as a precaution because they may contain horsemeat without being marked on the packaging.

Borg's spokesman said yesterday it was too early to require labelling on meat used in

processed foods despite the growing uproar.

In Britain, the authorities are worried that horsemeat could contain traces of equine medicines such as phenylbutazone, used to control pain, which are unsuited for human consumption.

The consumption of horsemeat is largely taboo in Britain, unlike in many other parts of Europe where it is sold openly.

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Health

Pre-pregnancy folic acid linked to lower autism risk

WASHINGTON (AFP) - Children born to women who started taking folic acid supplements four to eight weeks before pregnancy appear to be at a lower risk of autism, a study showed Tuesday.

Pal Suren of the Norwegian Institute of Public Health and colleagues looked into the use of folic acid supplements before and during early pregnancy, and any impact on the later risk of various disorders on the autism spectrum.

"Our main finding was that maternal use of folic acid supplements around the time of conception was associated with a lower risk of autistic disorder," the authors wrote in the Journal of the American Medical Association.

The journal recalled that many countries recommend flour be enriched with folic acid to lower the risk of birth defects, and that women are often advised to take folic acid supplements before and during pregnancy.

Despite the practice, European and North American studies have found that many pregnant women take less folic acid in their diet than is necessary to prevent neural tube defects.

The 85,176 Norwegian children who took part in the study were born between 2002 and 2008.

Among the sample, 270 children, or 0.32 percent, were diagnosed with autism spectrum disorders, and researchers found that there was an inverse association between folic acid use and subsequent autism risks.

Mothers who took folic acid supplements in early pregnancy had a 40 percent lower risk of having children with autistic disorder compared with mothers who did not take folic acid, the researchers found.

Folic acid is found in naturally high levels in foods such as dark leafy greens, asparagus and broccoli, as well as citrus fruits.



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<<< or >>>

**MAIN
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SE**

Sautéed King Scallops
Sautéed King Scallop on top of vanilla and yellow squash risotto and served with cilantro butter lemon sauce

<<< or >>>

**DE
SSER
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Parfait of Chocolate Tiramisu

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Russia parliament votes to ban smoking in public places

MOSCOW (AFP) - Russian lawmakers on Tuesday passed on third and final reading a bill banning smoking in public places, a major pillar of a Kremlin drive to improve health in the nicotine-addicted country.

In the State Duma lower house, 441 deputies voted for the measure with one against, Russian news agencies reported.

The Kremlin headed by President Vladimir Putin has identified smoking as a critical public health issue that causes up to 400,000 deaths annually in a country where over 40 percent of the adult population are smokers.

The bill introduces strict no-smoking rules in most public areas, including schools, medical and sports facilities, beaches, passenger trains and ships, and establishes a non-smoking perimeter around entrances to train and metro stations, usually areas thick with smoke.

Smoking is also to be prohibited in restaurants, cafes and hotels.

The law also sets up new

conditions for selling tobacco, banning sales in small kiosks, and establishing minimum prices per pack. Currently cigarettes cost as little as \$1.30 and are sold everywhere, often to teenagers.



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Sci-Tech

Gene breakthrough boosts hopes for sorghum



PARIS (AFP) - Agricultural researchers on Tuesday said they had found a gene that

boosts the digestibility of sorghum, transforming a humble grain into a potential

Apple still has 'magic,' innovation, says CEO Cook

SAN FRANCISCO (AFP) - Apple remains ahead of its rivals in the ability to innovate and "create magic" despite tougher competition in key sectors like smartphones and tablets, chief executive Tim Cook said Tuesday.

Cook said Apple still has strong growth opportunities because of its ability to work simultaneously on hardware, software and services, brushing aside suggestions that Apple has passed its peak.

"Apple has the ability to innovate in all three of these spheres and create magic," Cook said during a question-and-answer session at the Goldman Sachs Technology and Internet Conference.

"This isn't something you can just write a check for. This is something you build over decades."

Cook declined to talk

about any new products, but said he remains upbeat on Apple's ability to boost sales of its popular iPhones and iPads in markets around the world.

"I'm incredibly bullish about the future and what Apple can do," he said.

"Apple has skills in hardware, in software and in services ... There is no better place for innovation."

He said Apple was not planning to make a "cheap" product that failed to live up to its standards, but that he was aware that some consumers could not afford some Apple devices.

"Our North Star is always great products, not how to hit a price point," he said.

He maintained that Apple's iPhone has "tremendous momentum" in a market which is expected to triple in the coming years.

famine-beater.

Sorghum (Latin name Sorghum bicolor) is a tough tropical cereal grown in dry regions of Africa, India and the southern United States.

The plant is drought-tolerant but ranks far lower than corn, wheat and rice as a food because the human digestive system cannot absorb many of its calories.

It is often grown as animal feed, and interest in it as a biofuel has also surged recently.

But, according to a study published in the journal Nature Communications, sorghum's future may

change.

Scientists in Australia said they had pinpointed a tiny variant in a gene which controls an enzyme called pullulanase that helps to break down starch in sorghum, making the grain more digestible.

The gene does not affect the grain's other helpful characteristics, they reported.

The next step should be to cross-breed commonly grown strains of sorghum with the variety that has the genetic variant in order to boost the crop's value as a food source for humans, the study said.

"Ultimately, increasing the calorific value of this crop without reducing yield can help to ensure global food security in drought-prone areas of Africa, Asia and elsewhere, while minimising negative effects of agricultural expansion," the paper said.

The work marks the latest advance in agricultural genomics, in which the DNA of key crop plants is sequenced to look for genes that influence yields or resistance to drought, flood and salinity.

The genome of sorghum was sequenced in January 2009.

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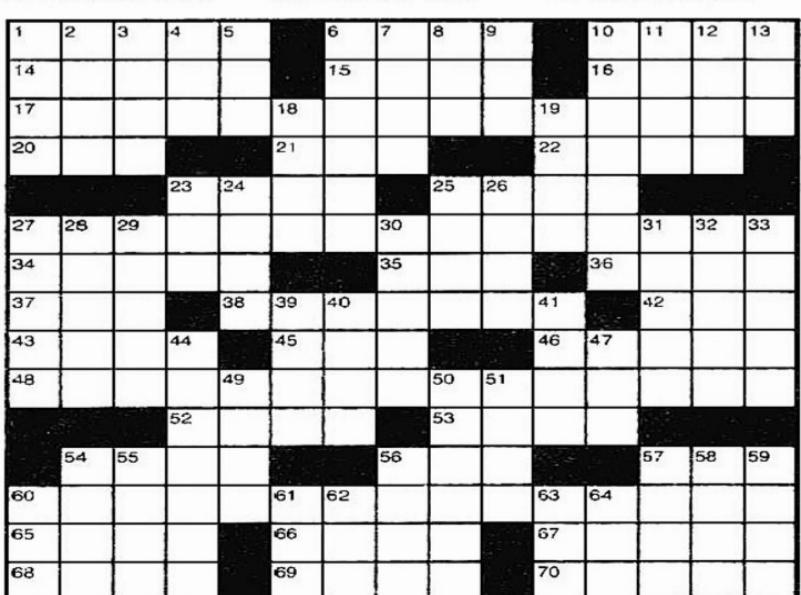
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ACROSS

- | ACROSS | |
|---------------------------------|---|
| 1. Matter at hand | 38. Attics |
| 6. Take from the freezer | 42. African antelope |
| 10. "Casablanca" role | 43. Disgusted sounds |
| 14. Avis competitor | 45. Washroom: abbr. |
| 15. Assistant | 46. Garb for Sir Percivale |
| 16. "So sorry!" | 48. Express support hypocritically |
| 17. Faux pas | 52. Resting upon |
| 20. Dour | 53. "Old MacDonald — farm..." |
| 21. Letters for DDE | 54. Service branch: abbr. |
| 22. Actor Will of "The Waltons" | 56. DDE opponent |
| 23. Guthrie born in 1947 | 57. Pod dweller |
| 25. Sheep mothers | 60. Live — (have just enough for the present) |
| 27. Be bested | 65. Leer |
| 34. forcibly | 66. Boorish dude |
| 35. Vacation time in Dijon | |
| 36. English river | |
| 37. Shoe cowboy | |



ABOUT FACE!

18. Touched
 19. Curved arch
 23. Part of a vowel sequence
 24. Circular band
 25. Diminutive ending
 26. Hone
 27. Return to the bag
 28. Female friend: Sp.
 29. Mommy in "Make Room for Daddy"
 30. Courage
 31. Phrase on a candy heart
 32. Squabbling child's phrase
 33. Surgery start
 39. Cat food brand
 40. Grate harshly
 41. Declared
 44. Hoosegow
 47. Mitsubishi rival
 49. Symptom of some allergies
 50. Dashing Butler et al.
 51. Anatomical prefix
 54. Compel
 55. Flatfish
 56. Together, in music
 57. Knit, reversed
 58. And others: abbr.
 59. Charlie Chan phrase
 60. Very vain man
 61. Words on a French menu
 62. "___ and Forever"
 63. Margaret Hulihan's rank: abbr.
 64. Mine find

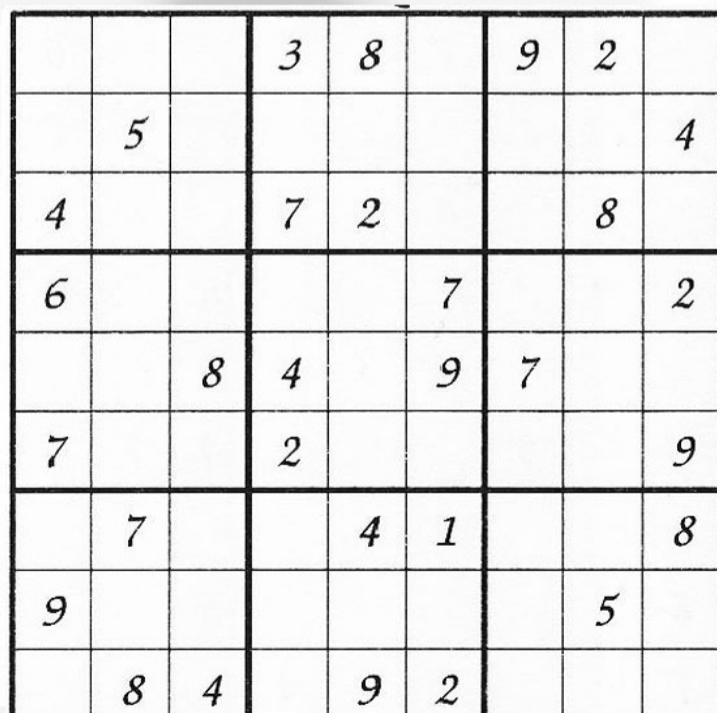
SOLUTION



Complete the grid so that every row and every column contains the numbers 1 through 9

A number is Never repeated in a row or column.

In addition every rectangle must contain the numbers 1 through 9



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In addition every rectangle must contain the numbers 1 through 9



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Evictees commit suicide as Spain debates reform

MADRID (AFP) - A retired couple in Spain killed themselves yesterday because they faced eviction, police said, as lawmakers considered legislation to save ruined homeowners from being thrown into the street.

In the latest in a series of suicides reportedly linked to evictions, the couple, aged 68 and 69, killed themselves in their home in Calvia on the island of Mallorca, a police spokesman who asked not to be named told AFP.

Hours later in Madrid, members of parliament agreed to debate a citizens' motion to protect poor homeowners from eviction -- a fate faced by hundreds of thousands in Spain.

The lower house of parliament agreed to debate the bill after lawmakers of the ruling conservative Popular Party threw their weight behind it despite earlier resistance, the party's parliamentary spokesman Alfonso Alonso said.

In response to popular protests and reported suicides, Spain's government in November passed a two-year morato-

rium on evictions -- but campaigners insist that it go further.

The bill proposes to change the law to end evictions and to allow insolvent homeowners to write off their debts by surrendering their home.

Under the current law, a bank can pursue a mortgage holder for the remaining balance of a loan if the value of the seized property isn't sufficient.

The new bill was brought to parliament by PAH, a popular campaign for housing rights that gathered 1.4 million signatures on a petition demanding that it be debated by lawmakers.

Finance**US budget posts first surplus in four months**

WASHINGTON (AFP) - The US government budget showed a surplus in January for the first time since September as the overall budget deficit trended lower, Treasury Department data released yesterday showed.

The federal budget had a surplus of \$2.9 billion, the biggest January surplus in five years, the Treasury said. In January 2012, the budget gap stood at \$27.4 billion.

The surplus caught analysts by surprise; the average estimate was a \$2.0 billion deficit.

The unexpected January surplus followed a \$1.2 billion deficit in December, which had marked a sharp drop from the average \$146.1 billion shortfall in the two prior months.

In January, revenues jumped 16.1 percent from a year ago to \$272.2 billion. Spending also increased but at a much slower pace, of 2.9 percent, to \$269.3 billion.

In the first four months of the 2013 fiscal year that began on October 1, the federal budget gap has shrunk 17 percent compared with the same period in 2012, to \$290.4 billion.

For the current fiscal year, the Obama administration forecast the deficit will come in below \$1 trillion for the first time in five years, at \$991 billion, or 6.1 percent of GDP.

The United States reduced its budget deficit to 7.0 percent of gross domestic product, or economic output, in fiscal 2012, down from 8.7 percent of GDP in the prior year, under a tightening effort aimed at paring high debt and promoting sustainable growth.

With GDP growth weak -- a 0.1 percent contraction in the 2012 fourth quarter -- and the unemployment rate at 7.9 percent, many Americans feel the country is still in recession despite its official exit in June 2009.

YESTERDAY'S Crossword Answer

ATOM	SCAR	ABELL
LILI	ERSE	MERIT
ONES	VOTE	AHAND
PEOPLE	WILL	TALK
RAND	AIL	
STOIC	SPAS	FORM
EARNED	ESS	DEA
THAT	TOUCH	MINK
TOT	TRA	SEESTO
SEED	INNS	DATES
RAN	ARUT	
BRINGING	UPBABY	
OLIVE	TOGS	ASEA
HOLES	ALEE	LIEN
SCENT	LADS	LARK

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Status quo or radical change? Church ponders next pope



This combo made with twelve file picture on February 11, 2013 shows Cardinals likely to succeed to Pope Benedict XVI who announced today he will step down at the end of this month after an eight-year pontificate. Top row from left : Brazilian Cardinal Claudio Hummes, Honduran Cardinal Oscar Andres Rodriguez Maradiaga, Argentine Archbishop Jorge Mario Bergoglio, Mexican Cardinal Norberto Rivera Carrera, Brazilian Joao Braz de Aviz, Philippines' Luis Antonio Tagle, and Nigerian Peter Turkson. Bottom row from left : Austrian Christoph Schonborn, Hungarian Peter Erdoe, Italian Angelo Scola, Canadian Marc Ouellet, Nigerian Francis Arinze, Nigerian John Onaiyekan, and USA's Timothy Dolan. (AFP PHOTO)

VATICAN CITY (AFP) - Who will be the next pope? Cardinals tasked with electing Benedict XVI's successor after his resignation later this month must choose a leader capable of guiding the Church through a difficult period, marred by scandals, internal tensions and growing secularism.

Benedict's rule has been criticised as overly "eurocentric" in some quarters and Vatican watchers say the college of cardinals set to meet in the Sistine Chapel in the Vatican for the secret vote may seize the moment to elect a Latin-American, African or Asiatic pope.

Others say 85-year old Benedict -- who is resigning for age reasons -- may call on

the cardinals to elect someone younger, who is less likely to suffer failing health early in his mandate.

"His decision to step down will have a big influence on the choice of the future pope. The old must make way for the young. The Church needs it," said Marco Politi, Vatican expert and author of a celebrated biography on Benedict.

While bookmakers had given even odds on the choice of Joseph Ratzinger in April 2005, no-one had foreseen Karol Wojtyla's surprise election in 1978.

There are 118 cardinals who are under the age of 80 and therefore eligible to vote in Benedict's successor. The red-robed cardinals, who usu-

ally meet between 15 and 20 days after the death of a pope, take an oath of secrecy when they enter -- and are automatically excommunicated if they break that oath.

Of those voting, 67 were selected to be cardinals by Benedict -- known for his staunch conservatism -- while the 51 others were picked by John Paul II, who was seen as even more conservative.

Sixty-two of the cardinals are European, 28 of whom are Italian, while 19 come from South America, 14 from North America, 11 from Africa and 11 from Asia and one from Oceania.

Among those tipped as possible candidates for St. Peter's chair are Canadian

Marc Ouellet and the Archbishop of Milan, Angelo Scola, though some analysts have said they are likely to be considered as not charismatic enough to revive faith amid rising secularism.

Previous hot tickets Peter Erdö, from Hungary, and the pope's Austrian friend Christoph Schoenborn, have recently dropped in favour, while American Timothy Dolan is increasingly tipped for his mediatic skills -- key in helping the Vatican overhaul its image in modern society following a damaging wave of clerical child abuse scandals.

While a quarter of the cardinals who can elect a new pope are Italian, watchers say their chances of a win this time were scuppered by the

leaks scandal which hit the Vatican last year, which was blamed by some on internal bickering between Italians jostling for power.

Among the potential candidates for the first African pope are Peter Turkson of Ghana -- the head of the Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace who is considered a progressive candidate -- and Nigerian John Onaiyekan.

William Hill bookmakers in London on Monday tipped 80-year-old Francis Arinze of Nigeria as their favourite to take over from Benedict, with odds of 2-1, followed by Turkson at 5-2.

Front-runners in Latin America -- which boasts the largest number of practicing Catholics in the world -- are Claudio Hummes and Joao Braz de Aviz.

Progressives favour Honduran Oscar Rodriguez Maradiaga, head of Caritas Internationalis, but he is considered by the Church's more traditional members to lean too far left, and is unlikely to win the two-thirds majority needed.

Among the outsiders to watch, experts note dynamic Manila Archbishop Luis Antonio Tagle -- the Church's second youngest cardinal, appointed just last year at 55 years old -- is very popular in Asia and is rising fast within the Vatican.

Vatican expert Sandro Magister said he did not hold out much hope of a vote for change, tipping Ouellet from Canada, Italy's Scola or France's Andre Vingt-trois as front-runners, and "certainly not a younger candidate or a pope from the Southern hemisphere."

Gold Coast Aruba: This is the time to invest

-- Management of Gold Coast Aruba, the island's newest and most innovative gated community, reports that sales have been very good and encouraging as the global economy recovers and people looking to purchase vacation homes have found that Gold Coast is an outstanding investment value. Director of Sales, Fito Croes has noticed a surprising percentage of owners in reality do not spend a great amount of time personally to use the villas or town homes they purchase, but are taking advantage of Gold Coast's rental services to turn their investment into ready income.

"The greater portion of home owners are using their "home away from home" in Aruba to escape the winter months, or spend holidays with the family on the island," he remarked, "but I am gratified by how many are buying because they felt secure with real estate investment on Aruba. They really study the history and economy of the island and are impressed with the political stability and continually increasing value of prime locations. Gold Coast is in the heart of Malmok, considered Aruba's most exclusive community where the value of properties has only increased over time. It is only minutes to the best beaches and all the action, and yet offers a quiet and secluded get-



away; we are very pleased by the response to our concept."

Fito, with his sister Mayrin and brother Rudy operate Cas Bon, which has been constructing homes and building developments for all budgets for nearly twenty years. "Gold Coast Aruba is the jewel in our crown," observes Fito. "We were very excited about this project and the scope of actual and planned facilities and amenities. We have spoken to countless island visitors to find out what they would really want in a permanent residence on Aruba, and took from there."

Input from frequent vacationers who have dreamed of their own home in Aruba contributed to the realization of Gold Coast Aruba which when complete will be a community of 260 town homes, villas and condominiums.

ums with a stunning clubhouse complemented by two additional community pool areas. The Clubhouse is about to start construction and will offer to



the community homeowners and visitors 2 tennis courts, full service spa and fitness center as well as a stunning pool area and is expected to be complete by early 2013. It will also house a restaurant and mini-market.

Owners who purchased upon the groundbreaking only a few short years ago, are already enjoying a nearly 50% appreciation on their investment, particularly those taking advantage of the on site management's rental services program. There is always a great demand for Aruba and facilities such as those at Gold Coast, make it easy for some owners to see a valuable return on their investment.

The design of the residences and public areas is open, airy and spacious, taking full advantage of the island environment, with quality construction and finishing available. Partnering with two of Aruba's top providers of kitchens and bathrooms enables developers to offer custom options allowing buyers to individualize their homes. An elegant and chic furniture package is available or island designers will assist owners in finishing the décor to their specific tastes.

There are many aspects to purchasing property; not the least is the future value of the

investment. To further enhance this, Gold Coast management have inaugurated a number of in-house services and have recently become affiliated Interval International, the world's largest network of vacation ownership properties which provides an unlimited international pool of investors to tap for ownership and rental prospects. Property exchange for a vacation in another destination is also available through the Interval International affiliation. Gold Coast's own rental services have also proven highly successful in assisting owners in renting their villas; 24-hour security and maintenance services also tip the scales when it is time to make a decision. Aside from all this, housekeeping, child care, catering services, car rental through its partnership with AVIS car rental are also available as well as pre-shopping services so cupboards and refrigerators are stocked upon arrival, which can also be arranged through their property management department. Personnel are also available to assist in arranging restaurant reservations and island activities.

Visit their website: www.goldcoastaruba.com for more details and availability or call 586-2200 to arrange a personal tour.

Eat like a local at The Queen's restaurant at Palm Beach Plaza



Grandma's classic stew beef w. rice & peas and potato salad

An elegant décor with a breezy terrace overlooking Palm Beach welcomes guests to Varella Innocencia's very popular restaurant showcasing authentic local cuisine:

The Queen's

They may have moved from Oranjestad to hipper new digs in Palm Beach Plaza, but the food and prices are strictly native, which is what first won

this charming eatery their loyal clientele. Varella's mom, Luisa, is still in the kitchen, conjuring up the delicious dishes that have been in her family for generations, acknowledged on the menu with items such as "Carni Stoba di Mamachi"- "Grandma's Beef Stew," and their Arawak Steak, along with local delicacies like Keshi Yena - "Full Cheese."

This is a tasty, filling stew of chicken, with other ingredients that are handy that day, all incased in a thick skin of melted Gouda. It was very satisfying and particularly memorable paired with The Queen's garlic bread and very special Pica, a mix of chopped onions and the famous local hot pepper, Madame Janette. Not overly spicy, it lends that perfect bit of tang to this deliciously pictur-esque meal.

One of the distinctions of Aruban cuisine is incorporating unique indigenous ingredients such as in Wild Cucumber Stew and a particular light fish chowder accompanied by the local specialties pan bati (corn meal pancake) and funchi (the local version of polenta.)

.Seafood main courses for Catch of the Day Aruban Style to shrimp and a mixed seafood platter with shrimp, fish, squid, scallops and mussels. Meat



Varella, Luisa and the next generation of chef

dishes such as BBQ Chicken and Ribs or Grilled Tenderloin, each including a choice of 2 side dishes; all quite yummy and bargain-priced to boot!

The Queen's is located on the second level of Palm Beach Plaza, tucked into a cozy corner at the front of the mall. If you have a mind to try the real deal in Aruban food,

without a doubt, this is the way to truly eat like a local. **They are open from 11:00 AM to 11:00 PM, daily**, offering indoor and outdoor dining. Aside from an extensive menu they also have daily specials made from whatever is in season and Mama Luisa is in the mood to prepare, so don't forget to ask about what isn't on the menu!

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SPORTS

Tiger commits to three events ahead of Masters

MIAMI (AFP) - Tiger Woods committed to play three tournaments in the next month ahead of the Masters, where the 14-time major champion will resume his pursuit of the all-time record 18 major titles won by Jack Nicklaus.

World No. 2 Woods announced Tuesday on his website that he will play in next week's World Golf Championships Match Play Championship, the US PGA Honda Classic and next month's WGC Cadillac Championship at Doral.

Together with the Arnold Palmer Invitational at Bay Hill in late March, those are the key tuneups usually on Woods' schedule as he prepares for the first major event of each year, the Masters in early April at Augusta National.

Woods began his US PGA campaign with a victory last month at Torrey Pines, his 75th career triumph and record eighth on the course where he won his most recent major title at the 2008 US Open.

Next week's 64-player match-play event will feature



most of the world's top 64 players in an \$8.75 million showdown at Dove Mountain, Arizona, featuring World No. 1 Rory McIlroy, Woods and English World No. 3 Luke Donald.

Woods won the WGC Match-Play event in 2003, 2004 and 2008. He lost to Nick Watney in last year's second round.

After a week off, Woods

will play at the PGA event February 28-March 3 at PGA National Champion Course near Miami in a \$6 million event where McIlroy is the defending champion and Woods is aiming to dethrone him.

Woods shared second in 2012, two strokes off the pace despite a final-round charge with an eight-under 62, the lowest round of his career.

"I'm excited to be playing in the Honda Classic again," Woods said. "I like the golf course and I came pretty close last year. It's part of a busy stretch for me and I want

to continue playing well."

McIlroy's victory in the event last year launched him into the World No. 1 ranking for the first time, a spot he lost and reclaimed and has now held for 26 weeks in a row.

Woods also committed to the \$8.75 million WGC event at Doral on March 7-10. Woods has won the event six times -- 1999, 2002, 2003, 2005, 2006 and 2007 -- and won events at Doral in 2005 and 2006.

Last year at Doral, Woods withdrew with seven holes remaining in his final round because of a left leg injury. Woods felt pain in his left Achilles warming up and limped during the round, bowing out after his tee shot at the 12th hole.

Classic-bound Gonzalez denies doping

MIAMI (AFP) - Washington Nationals pitcher Gio Gonzalez, set to start for the United States in the World Baseball Classic, denied using performance-enhancing drugs Tuesday as he reported to pre-season training camp.

Gonzalez, who won a career-best 21 games last year, was among Major League Baseball players named in records of a Miami clinic linked to supplying banned substances to athletes, records revealed in reports by Miami New Times.

"At the end of the day, I've never taken performance-enhancing drugs and I never will," Gonzalez said.

Max Gonzalez, Gio's father, was a patient of clinic owner Anthony Bosch, although the Nationals pitcher said he was unaware of that until the report.

The elder Gonzalez said he went to the clinic lose weight and declared his son "as clean as apple pie".

Documents showed the younger Gonzalez's name next to a list of ingredients for a substance called "pink cream", a synthetic testos-

terone that is among substances banned by Major League Baseball, which is investigating the affair.

"I'm cooperating with MLB and I've done everything they want," Gonzalez said. "I feel strong with their program and what they're doing. At the end of the day, it's waiting on them."

Gonzalez said he was shocked and stunned when his name was on Biogenesis documents along with such stars as Alex Rodriguez, Nelson Cruz and Melky Cabrera.

"All of South Florida, all of baseball knows my father is the most proud father in baseball," Gonzalez said. "Other than that, I have no clue why my name was on the list or on the notebook or anything."

Nationals general manager Mike Rizzo said in January that "the issue is currently being reviewed by Major League Baseball and it would be inappropriate for the Nationals to comment until that review is completed."

Taj Mahal
Taste of India

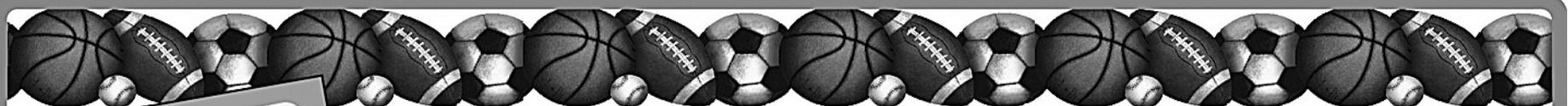
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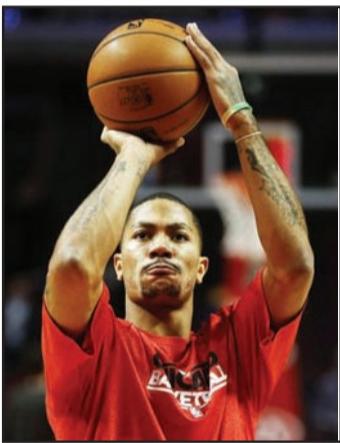
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I won't return until I'm '110 percent' fit: Rose



CHICAGO (AFP) - Derrick Rose, the Chicago Bulls play-maker who has not played since tearing left knee ligaments in last year's playoff opener, says he will not return to the NBA until he is "110 percent."

In comments to USA

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Today, Rose said that despite the fact he is travelling with the Bulls and practices with them, there is no timetable for the 2011 NBA Most Valuable Player's return to the lineup.

"I don't have a set date," Rose said. "I'm not coming back until I'm 110 percent. Who knows when that can be? It can be within a couple of weeks. It could be next year. It could be any day. It could be any time."

"It's just that I'm not coming back until I'm ready."

Rose rated his current condition as "probably in the high 80s" and called his return "Far away. Far away."

Rose has spent most of the past 10 months working to put himself back in peak condition and is excited for the chance to show that he might have improved his game -- once he is healthy enough to play again.

"I know it's going to be something good," Rose said. "With all this hard work I've been putting into my game, I'm doing stuff I never did before. I gained 10, 11 pounds of muscle."

"I don't know what type of player I'm going to be. I just know that I'm going to be very good."

Williams edges towards regaining top spot



DOHA (AFP) - Serena Williams moved to within two wins of becoming world number one for the first time in two-and-a-half years after reaching the third round of the Qatar Open here on Tuesday.

The Wimbledon, US Open and Olympic champion showed no obvious signs of physical discomfort during a 6-2, 6-1 win over Daria Gavrilova, the 18-year-old former world number one junior from Russia who had reached the main draw as a lucky loser.

This may be some comfort for Williams after finishing last month's Australian Open with an upsetting quarter-final defeat and back and

ankle injuries.

However Williams played well within herself, stroking the ball smoothly, and avoiding stressful movement as she concentrated on making efficient progress without mishap.

"I am very happy to be here," said Williams, which was undoubtedly true given the size of her damaged ankle three weeks ago, and the extent of her disappointment at not reaching world number one in Melbourne.

"I feel really good. I played a really tough girl who has been junior champion, so I think it was a really good match."

Some of those words sounded like diplomatic niceties, because from 2-2 onwards Gavrilova was out-classed and Williams took nine games in a row at a canter in the middle of the match.

She completed the task in less than an hour, and that was without her fearsome first serve - which had a low accuracy rate 52 percent - really functioning as her best weapon at all.

Williams was also a little shaky at the end, and became annoyed with herself for a few mistakes. She had however done the main task, which was to show that she may be fit enough still to

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Sunday Feb. 17th! Professional footballer Robin Nelisse to offer clinic to Aruban youngsters



On Sunday, February 17th, famous footballer Robin Nelisse will be offering a free football clinic here. The government of Aruba has been keenly promoting sports on the island, because of the tremendous health benefits derived from sports. In this context they have been trying to attract great players from abroad to come and give our young people some of the techniques needed so they too can become professionals one day.

This time, they succeeded in bringing Robin Nelisse to Aruba. Nelisse will be offering an important clinic in the Dakota Stadium on Sunday, February 17th from 1:00 pm in the afternoon for young people between the ages 13



to 15 years. Contact David Adbul for registration at telephone 592-5235.

Robin Nelisse was born January 25, 1988 in Rotterdam to a Dutch Mother and Aruban father. Nelisse's career began with Feyenoord Rotterdam, for whom he played from 1997 to 1999. From 1999 to 2000 he played for Cambuur Leeuwarden, then from 2000 to 2005 he played for AZ. Later, 2005 to 2008 he was on the FC Utrecht team. Then, from 2008 to 2011 he

was a Red Bull Salzburg player in Austria. Due to a knee injury Nelisse stopped playing professional football. He is currently building a house in Aruba and is the ambassador for the Dutch Caribbean Stars.

It is hoped that many youngsters will register and participate in Nelisse's free clinic. Please register early to make sure you don't get left out of this important learning experience.

Hernandez agrees to richest-pitcher deal

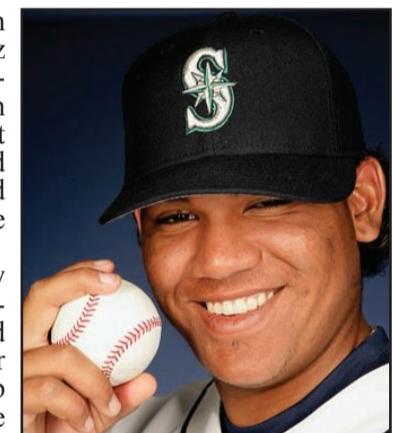
SEATTLE, Washington (AFP) - Felix Hernandez agreed to terms on a seven-year deal worth \$175 million with Seattle on Tuesday that will make the 26-year-old right-hander the highest-paid pitcher in Major League Baseball.

The deal, confirmed by the Mariners on their website, was nearly completed last week but delayed after the American League club raised concerns about the Venezuelan's right elbow. The contract is set to be signed today.

"It's a great thing for the Seattle Mariners and it's a great thing for Felix Hernandez," Mariners general manager Jack Zduriencik said.

Hernandez had been set to make \$19.5 million this year and \$20 million next year to complete a five-year deal worth \$78 million signed in 2010. Instead, he will make \$25 million a year from now through the 2019 campaign.

Major League Baseball's largest prior deal for a pitcher was the seven-year contract worth \$161 million signed before the 2010 season began by New York Yankees star



CC Sabathia.

The Mariners have not reached the playoffs since 2001.

Hernandez, the 2010 American League Cy Young Award winner as top pitcher, hurled a perfect game for Seattle over Tampa Bay last August on his way to a 13-9 season with a 3.06 earned-run average and 223 strikeouts in 33 starts.

The three-time All-Star has a 98-76 Major League Baseball record with a 3.22 earned-run average in 238 starts for the Mariners since his 2005 debut. He has pitched no less than 232 innings in each of the past four seasons.

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